

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

COMPLETE LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-18 : (Canceled)

Claim 19 : (Previously Presented) A telecommunication network section, comprising:

- a) two nodes;
- b) a group of at least two bidirectional data lines extending between the two nodes;
- c) at least one of the data lines being redundant;
- d) each node including a control unit, at least one switching matrix, and a plurality of interface circuits;
- e) each data line being connected to an interface circuit of each of the two nodes;
- f) each interface circuit being operative for transmitting a predetermined number of channels between a data line and the switching matrix;
- g) the control unit of a node being operative for acceding to a configuration record which at any time specifies existing connections between channels of the interface circuits via the switching matrix; and
- h) the control unit being operative for detecting whether an external condition is fulfilled or not, and, in case of non-fulfilment of the condition, for allowing changes to

the connections recorded in the configuration record, and in case of fulfilment of the condition, for blocking changes to the connections recorded in the configuration record, while at the same time allowing transmission of information via the switching units of the node to continue.

Claim 20 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 19, in that each node is operative for transmitting a working specimen and at least one redundant specimen of each information unit to be transmitted to the second node via different data lines of the group and, among plural specimens of an information unit received from the second node via the data lines of the group to take account only of the working specimen.

Claim 21 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 20, in that the number of data lines in the group is two.

Claim 22 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 19, in that each node is operative, in case of a failure of the transmission of a working specimen to the second node by the predetermined data line, for determining another data line of a group.

Claim 23 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 19, in that the external condition is fulfilled or not individually for each interface circuit, and in that the control unit is operative for blocking changes, in case of the condition being fulfilled for one of the interface circuits, only for connections of the interface circuit for which the condition is fulfilled.

Claim 24 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 19, in that the control unit is operative for specifying a number of channels supported by each interface circuit of the node.

Claim 25 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 24, in that the external condition is a discrepancy between the number of channels of an interface circuit recorded in the configuration record and its actual number of channels.

Claim 26 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 25, in that the node is operative for modifying the recorded number of channels according to an external instruction.

Claim 27 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 26, in that the node is operative, after detection of fulfilment of the condition, for checking upon receipt of the external instruction whether the condition continues to be fulfilled, and, in case of non-fulfilment of the condition, to remove the blocking.

Claim 28 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 19, in that it is part of an SDH telecommunication network.

Claim 29 : (Previously Presented) The section of claim 28, in that a number of channels of the interface circuit before upgrading is 16, and after upgrading is 64.

Claim 30 : (Currently Amended) A method of upgrading a section of a telecommunication network, comprising the steps of:

- a) removing working data traffic from a data line of a group of at least two bidirectional data lines extending between two nodes;
- b) fulfilling an external condition;
- c) replacing a pair of interface circuits of each node connected to the data line free from the working data traffic; and

d) repeating all the above steps until all ~~the~~ pairs of interface circuits connected to the data lines of the group are exchanged, and the external condition is unfulfilled again.

Claim 31 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the external condition is a discrepancy between a number of channels of an interface circuit recorded in a configuration record and its actual number of channels.

Claim 32 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31, in that the external condition is fulfilled by entering a number of channels that is different from the number of channels of an existing interface circuit into the configuration record and is unfulfilled by replacing the interface circuit by a new one and causing a control unit to compare the recorded number of channels with the number of channels of the new interface circuit.

Claim 33 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32, in that, before carrying out steps a) to c), upgrading at least one switching matrix of at least one of the nodes.

Claim 34 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, in that the node has at least two switching matrices and that, before exchanging one of these switching matrices, it is determined as the switching matrix for redundant specimens.

Claim 35 : (Previously Presented) A method of upgrading a region of a telecommunication network, the region comprising a plurality of nodes interconnected to form a ring by groups of bidirectional data lines, the method comprising the step of: carrying out, for each section formed by two nodes of the ring and a group of data lines connecting the nodes, the steps of claim 30.

Claim 36 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, in that, before carrying out the steps of claim 35, a switchover is carried out from an operating mode in which working specimens and redundant specimens of the information units are transmitted in different directions on the ring into a mode in which the working and redundant specimens circulate in the same direction, and that, after these steps, it is switched back again to the mode in which the working and redundant specimens are transmitted in different directions.